

USAG Darmstadt Town Hall

Jan. 10, 2007

U.S. Army Garrison Darmstadt community members gathered for a Town Hall meeting January 10, 2007 at 6 p.m. in the CLEOS building in Lincoln Village. Town Hall meetings are held regularly for all community members to voice any concerns or issues to the garrison commander and staff.

Lt. Col. David Astin, U.S. Army Garrison Darmstadt commander, opened the meeting. He thanked the group for their attendance and emphasized that the community members are our eyes and ears and really make this forum work. Items of note during the opening included the following:

- A short presentation from the commander regarding events and accomplishments. A more detailed list of accomplishments is viewable in the Power Point presentation from the event. A couple highlights include: the success of the 22nd Signal Battalion's Welcome Home party and guidance that has since come down that no more such events will be funded in the future. The 162 housing units in Travis Park in Aschaffenburg were successfully turned over to the German Government (BIMA). Only three families and 9 personnel remain in Babenhausen at this time. The commander also announced that the dining facility on Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne will close at the end of February. Funding to operate the dining facility was only approved for the three months following the redeployment of the signal brigade. The dining facility on Kelly Barracks will remain open. On a related topic, Ms. Cross mentioned that the date for the inactivation ceremony for the 22nd Signal Battalion is May 22, 2007.
- The Director of Emergency Services, Maj. Lonny MacDonald addressed the importance of the Child Supervision policy, which was handed out at the event and is available on the USAG Darmstadt web site. He stressed that, "Children are special. Let's keep them safe."
- AAFES General Manager, Tom Gross, announced that the Power Zone will be moving in to the PX Main Exchange on Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne. This will create one-stop shopping for customers and allows AAFES to better serve the community. Mr. Gross cited that the reducing population makes hiring employees more challenging. The consolidation eliminates the need to staff two separate operations (e.g. stock room, manager, cashiers, etc...). Power Zone inventory is not scheduled to be reduced. All over inventory was analyzed and non-selling-to-low selling items in other departments (e.g. low demand linens) will be eliminated to make room for the Power Zone and what the customer wants. If there is something that you need and cannot find it in the store, let them know and they will get it. They have couriers going to each of the four main stores in their footprint and if it is in stock, in most cases they can get it within 24 hours. The consolidation is scheduled to take place at the end of January-beginning of February; AAFES' slowest time of year.
- American Forces Network (AFN) Hessen station manager, MSG Wetzel, introduced himself and offered support to cover future events. He also mentioned that talks are underway with FRGs and PAOs to find ways to strengthen the

connection between the warfighter downrange and communities in Europe during deployment.

Open Forum

The commander mentioned that ICE comments were received and a traffic analysis was conducted resulting in the re-opening of a second exit gate on Lincoln Village. This should alleviate some of the congestion leaving Lincoln Village in the morning. Thank you for the ICE comment about the blind spot to pedestrian traffic created by dumpsters in the area. Steps have been made to increase visibility for drivers. Community members are urged to drive slowly when exiting and speed bumps will soon be constructed as an additional reminder. The commander also noted that this gate will revert to entrance only on school days between, 2:45-3:15 p.m. to allow room for school buses to pass through the gate.

Q: How long will redeployments/reintegration continue and when will more appointments start opening up for civilians and family members? Question was specifically directed at the dental clinic, but was addressed by both the health and dental clinics.

A: (from Medical Clinic Commander: Maj. Probus) Medical Acute care appointments (e.g. high fever) are seen within 24 hours; routine appointments, within 7 days; General exams (e.g. physicals, pap smears) within 28 days. The medical clinic has not had difficulty granting appointments within these time frames. Pharmacy late hours were reduced because of inability to justify staffing due to excessive no shows. If you need to pick up a prescription after hours, contact Maj. Probus and they will make arrangements on a one-on-one basis. Also, due to the change in sergeants time training, the clinic will now be open at 8 a.m. on Thursdays.

A: (from Dental Clinic Commander, Lt. Col. Vicki Wyan)

Things are starting to slow down, but could pick back up after soldiers return from leave. Appointments can only be made one week in advance so keep calling. Something may unexpectedly open-up. Civilians are still encouraged to use the Tri-care referral system and seek an off-post dentist.

Q: Do you see any changes to the blood donation policy to allow Americans who have lived in Europe for a long time to be allowed to donate blood.

A: Maj. Probus stated that there were no changes that he was aware of, but could put the inquiring community member in touch with a more informed party. He also noted that this should not stop anyone from filling out the paperwork at a blood drive and trying to donate. It shows your support of the unit and leaves a record of how many people attempted to donate versus accepted donations. The next blood drive for the 66MI is January 26, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Kelley Barracks Fitness Center.

Lt. Col. Astin made a note in regard to sergeants time training and family time change potentially affecting hours of operation. AAFES, DECA and Banks reported no change to hours of operation. The Fitness Centers on both Kelly Barracks/Nathan Hale Depot and Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne are now open at 5:30 a.m. to accommodate the 5-day-a-week PT requirement. Kelly gym previously opened at noon. It was also stated that the

Child Development Centers and School Ages Services already open at 5:45 a.m. and will not be changing hours.

Dr. Claus, principal of the Darmstadt Elementary, awarded Lt. Col. Astin with the “Royal Order of the Sardines” and gave him four cans of sardines as lunch for two days. The chocolate accompaniment was to absorb the smell at the meal’s conclusion. Dr. Claus eats sardines every day for lunch and “Sardine Day” day is observed at the elementary school, giving the students a chance to try new foods. Lt. Col. Astin had made a comment at Community Update the previous day about liking sardines.

Lt. Col. Astin recognized the boy scouts who were in attendance. Volunteers for merit badge counselors were solicited. If anyone knows boys, ages 11-18 who would like to become a scout, come to a meeting every Wednesday from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Boy Scouts Hut, building 4020 on Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne. The troop leader also mentioned that they are “trying to put the “outing” back in scouting” and have several trips planned. Notably mentioned is a future trip to Switzerland where the scouts will to put their self-made sled through a series of obstacle courses and rough terrain.

Lt. Col. Astin closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and “all that you do to make Darmstadt a community of excellence”.
The Town Hall meeting concluded at 6:50 p.m.